Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1, 3-8, 13-19, 21, 23, 25-34, 36, 38-43 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 23 being the independent claims. Claims 3, 4, 25, 26, 39, 40, and 43 are sought to be amended. Claim 44 is sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Election/Restriction

Applicants affirm the provisional election of the invention of group I, represented by claims 1, 3-8, 13-19, 21, 23, 25-34, 36, and 38-43 for prosecution. Applicants also affirm that this election was made without traverse. Claim 44 (group II) has been withdrawn from consideration and canceled by the above amendment, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1, 5-8, 13-19, 21, 23, 27-34, 36, 38, and 41-42 are allowed.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 3, 4, 25, 26, 39, 40, and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the

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subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 3, 25, 39, and 40 were rejected because the claims define the cryptography engine as a "DES engine," "state that the engine is configured to perform 3DES," or use DES operations. Specifically, the examiner states "that an engine of the data encryption standard has a well known structure ... because of the improvement [as recited in the claims], one can no longer claim that the engine is a DES engine since DES is a standard." (Office Action, p. 4). Applicants respectfully disagree. There is no standardized structure for the implementation of the Data Encryption Standard algorithm. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) states that a DES implementation "may consist of software, firmware, hardware, and any combination thereof." (http://csrc.nist.gov/cryptval/des/desval.html). NIST provides services to validate that implementations (including those that improve the efficiency of DES operation) conform to the DES algorithm. The assignee of the current invention has several DES implementations that have been validated by NIST.

In order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended claims 3 and 25 to recite "wherein the cryptography engine implements a DES-compatible algorithm." Claims 39 and 40 have been amended to recite "a block cipher algorithm."

Claims 26 and 43 were rejected due to minor defects of form. Applicants have amended claims 26 and 43 as suggested by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 23, 2006

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